



## **Nevada Representatives Engagement Guide Nevada Aviation Association**

Engaging with your Nevada Legislative Representatives (House and Senate members) is an important part of any airport administrator's job. Airport administrators are subject matter experts on their airports, where Nevada Senators and Representatives are not, and not only is educating your legislative representatives on issues impacting your airport imperative, but the Representatives also expect it (they do not have staff members to research issues themselves).

This guide is not a comprehensive or exhaustive list of ways you can engage with your Representatives since each community and airport is unique, and some efforts are going to be more effective than others depending on the community; however, here are a base level of activities that can work for all airport administrators.

It is far more important to develop a relationship with your Representatives prior to the legislative session than it is interacting with them during a session. If you wait to contact your Representatives when an issue arises in a legislative session, your voice will not be much different than the other thousands of people who contact each Representative during a session.

### **Who's Who**

Develop a list of all your Representatives with their contact information and remember to update the list as members change. The Nevada Legislative website (<https://www.leg.state.nv.us/>) is a great resource and provides valuable information including a directory of Representatives ([Assembly Current \(state.nv.us\)](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/assembly/current/)) and Senators ([Senate Current \(state.nv.us\)](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/senate/current/)), including a brief bio on each, a photo, which committees the Senator or Representative is on, and most importantly, contact information. While your airport is in a specific legislative district, its impact is felt well beyond the district limits; therefore, it is critical that you also reach out to legislators in surrounding districts. If you want to go one step further, go to the Representatives social media sites to learn more about them, what their hobbies are, what they do outside of their legislative duties, etc.

### **Communication is Key**

There are many ways to communicate with your Representatives, but nothing beats face to face. After a Representative is elected, send him/her a congratulations letter/email introducing yourself and letting them know you look forward to working with them. Then, a few weeks later, follow up and invite the Representative to meet you at your airport. Understand that new Representatives are busy after they are elected, so make sure your invite is flexible in terms of when (sometimes weekends are the best option) and be respectful of how much time your Representatives must meet with you.

During your meeting, depending on time, provide an overview of your airport and operation, discuss which state programs your facility participates in (Nevada Fund for Aviation (capital project funding), Air Service Development Board, aviation encouragement, marketing, Business Council, etc.), and provide a tour highlighting projects that have benefited from State funding, and projects included in your capital plans.

Develop a relationship with your Representatives before you need something from them. Use an email distribution list for your Representatives so that you can easily (and quickly) communicate good news



(more flights, more activity, more fuel sales, a new tenant, etc.) and issues of concern. Invite them to participate in your social media (Facebook page, etc.), invite them to airport events, attend any legislative meetings in your community (pre-and post-legislative meetings/luncheons) and add them to your press release or “good news” distribution list (and if you don’t have one of these, develop one!).

### **Session Time**

As stated, waiting to reach out to your Representative until a session begins is going to be far less effective than developing a relationship before the session. Wish them a good session prior to the session start and thank them for representing your interests after. During the session, use the services of the Nevada Aviation Association (NvAA) to get up to speed on issues affecting airports/aviation in Nevada (and probably your facility) through networking and white (issue) papers. Respond to legislative alerts by contacting your Representatives on how proposed legislation could impact you (positively or negatively). While a phone call may be appropriate/effective in some cases, email and text will likely be a more effective method of communication. Make sure the issue you are communicating is in the subject line of any email you send.

Spend time in Carson City during a legislative session. If you intend to go to Carson City, make sure to reach out to a NvAA Government Affairs lead to brush up on the organization’s legislative goals.

Finally, there are several airport administrators in the State that have experience working with the legislative representatives. Do not forget to reach out to any of them if you have questions, need assistance, etc. And, while this guide is geared to your Legislative Representatives, it is also applicable to your City/Town Council members, County Commissioners, etc. Good luck!